TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE Transcriber's Office FLOOR DEBATE

April 10, 2003 LB 46

now see what they were talking about. I cannot improve on what Senator Beutler said, but I'm going to mention what my amendment If you are interested in following the amendment...first of all, I want to say that Senator Brashear has done a lot of work on this bill. The Judiciary Committee staff has worked very hard. There are others who have taken an interest, but I'm not going to name everybody this time as we were doing the other Despite all of that hard work, the bill covers so much territory and attempts to do so many things, that we all realize additional polishing, touching up here and there, maybe grinding a rough edge off is necessary, and we've tried to work My amendment will be found on page 30 together to do that. (sic--31) of the bill. The current language, which is what my amendment would strike and replace with other language, says the following beginning in line 16: Intentional failure to comply with the department-approved personalized program plan by any committed offender as scheduled for any year, or pro rata part thereof, shall cause disciplinary action to be taken by the department resulting in the forfeiture of up to a maximum of three months' good time for the scheduled year. Members of the Legislature, many times we will enact language into law, and as I have been saying more and more, it's not necessarily what is into the law that determines the reality. It's how those who interpret the law and apply the law that determines the impact of that law. This language that I read has been used in a way by people in the Department of Corrections that would cause me to say it has been misused. It stacks up people and prevents them from having the opportunity to be paroled when under all other circumstances they should be. We never should put into the law language, if we're aware that that's what it's going to do, which can be deemed ambiguous by the department and used punitively when we did not intend it to be punitive. because this has been used to take good time and determine that a person is intentionally failing to comply when there is no intent to refuse or fail to comply, different language is necessary. We want to encourage people to take and complete these personalized programs, but we do not want to put something in place which is designed to have a curative effect and have it become a part of the disease. So this is the language that would be put in place after that, which I read, is stricken. The department may not impose disciplinary action upon any